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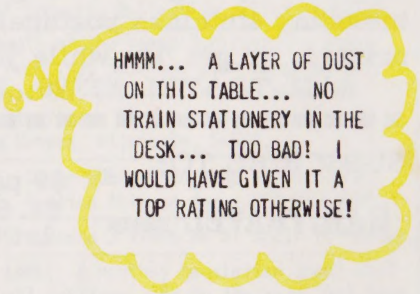
Rate the Trains



RTN'S FIFTH READER RATING SURVEY

RTN's current reader train rating survey, covering trains ridden between Jan 1 and Jun 30, 1977, is drawing to a close. We will allow two weeks beyond the Jun 30 cutoff date to receive ratings in the current survey. On page 21 of this issue appears a form for submitting ratings. You need not use the form--just write on a postcard or sheet of paper using your own format if you prefer.

INSTRUCTIONS: Rate as many trains as you wish, but only those you have personally ridden this year. Rate each train on each of the 11 categories (A-K): (A) Your impression of overall quality of service taking all into account; (B) On-board personnel's service (except food-lounge personnel); (C) Food and lounge crew's service; (D) Food quality; (E) Car condition (cleanliness, repair, etc.); (F) Desirability of route it follows; (G) Station services; (H) Track condition; (I) Desirability of train's schedule; (J) Train promotion; (K) Desirability of type of cars used. For your ratings, use the 9-point scale shown below. Please keep ratings separate from any other correspondence.

1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 — 6 — 7 — 8 — 9

Extremely poor ... Average, acceptable ... Extremely good

SEND YOUR RATINGS TO: Rail Travel News, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709. Thank you!

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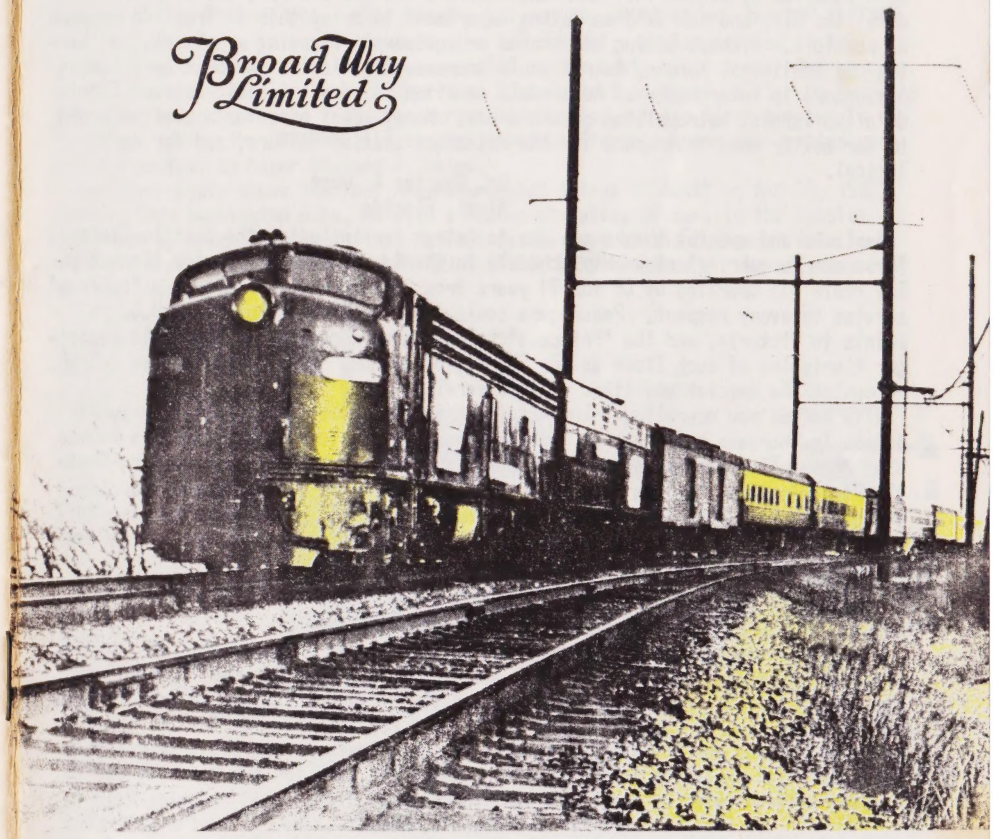
RAIL TRAVEL NEWS

VOL. 7 NO. 11
FIRST ISSUE OF
JUNE 1977
#155



The **pioneer** INAUGURAL RUN

I have to disagree with Robert T. Clark (LETTERS, last issue) on one point. If the SILVER STAR was not divided or consolidated at Auburndale Junction, there would be no Miami-Orlando service, one of the most viable corridors in Florida.

Mr. Clark did bring up the very important subject of Auburndale Junction (referred to as "Malfunction Junction" by rail travelers in Florida). Amtrak will not allow passengers to get on or off this critical rail junction, thru which all Amtrak trains in Florida cross the diamond. The Miami-Tampa corridor could be opened up if they did, using present trains on present schedules, and equaling auto travel times. One could leave Miami 10:10am on the METEOR, arrive Auburndale 2:10pm, leave Auburndale 3:10pm on the CHAMPION and arrive Tampa 4:45pm. In the other direction one could leave Tampa 8:05am on the CHAMPION, arrive Auburndale 9:05pm, leave Auburndale 10:20am on the SILVER STAR, and arrive Miami 3:05pm.

The only cost to Amtrak for this added route would be a shelter at the junction, which is under U.S. Highway 92 overpass. Why Amtrak has not utilized the junction for cross-Florida traffic is beyond me. Presently underway is a movement that has been endorsed by Region V of NARP and involves the Florida DOT, the City of Auburndale, the UTU, and Amtrak's marketing department to bring this to fruition as soon as possible. Without adding any trains or equipment, changing a schedule, or hiring one additional person, Amtrak could increase traffic and revenues by allowing passengers to interchange at Auburndale Junction to permit traffic between Florida's two largest metropolitan growth areas. Money spent here for a shelter would be far better than that spent for the Poinciana station failure, and far more logical.

Dr. Charles A. Dunn
Miami, Florida

Applause and special thanks are due to Amtrak for including the Seattle-Victoria "Princess Marguerite" steamship schedule in the May 1, 1977 nationwide timetable. The route was operated by CP for 71 years from 1904 thru 1974, and was a "railway" service in every respect. Passengers could purchase thru tickets from U.S. rail points to Victoria, and the "Princess" schedules were regularly carried in passenger timetables of such lines as NP, GN, SP, UP and CP. It's great to have Amtrak recognize the special qualities of this service.

With Amtrak now operating 4 long-distance trains to Seattle, every opportunity exists to increase patronage on those services by publicizing Marguerite's schedule. Hopefully, Amtrak patrons will come in increasing numbers to make the Seattle-Victoria trip, just as many each year take Amtrak to San Francisco "to ride the cable cars." The B.C. Steamship Co. has revised the ending date for the 1977 season, with service to be extended from Sep 30 to Monday Oct 10, the concluding day of a 3-day weekend on both sides of the border.

Glenn Lee, Princess Marguerite Committee
Seattle, Washington

Thank goodness we have a different Transportation man in Washington DC! Anybody would be an improvement over the last one. Thank goodness for Paul H. Reistrup, who doesn't get up from a Board meeting and say "I've got a plane to catch"! With our country's energy condition, why won't folks realize how much fuel it takes to airborne a plane and how little it takes to run a train across the country? With the population explosion in this country, there are uses for ALL types of public transportation--buses as well as trains and planes.

Helen B. Rose
Provo, Utah

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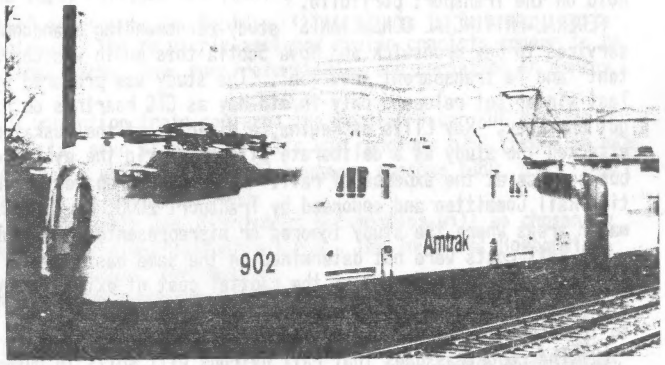
THE COVER STORY
THE BROADWAY LIMITED'S 75th ANNIVERSARY

One of America's most famous trains, the Chicago-NY & Washington BROADWAY LIMITED, had its 75th birthday on Jun 15. Amtrak marked the occasion by serving complimentary champagne and birthday cake on the train in both directions that day. The trains were hauled by newly-rededicated GG-1 electric engine 4935 on the electrified section as far west as Harrisburg (see CARS & CONSISTS, p. 22). The westbound run was 2½ hours late into Chicago, but the eastbound ran on time. (The NY Times erroneously referred to the 4935 as a steam engine, and then a diesel.)

Amtrak recalled that the BROADWAY and its arch-rival, the 20th CENTURY LIMITED, began operation on the same date in 1902, but the BROADWAY was at first called the PENNSYLVANIA SPECIAL. Confusion caused by the similarity of the names of that train and the PENNSYLVANIA LIMITED brought about the renaming of it as the BROADWAY LTD on Nov. 24, 1912. The train was named not to honor New York City's famed street, but to honor the broad right-of-way over which it operated--generally 4 tracks, with 6 between NY and Philadelphia. The Rivalry between the BROADWAY and the 20th CENTURY was intense. As rail travel declined, the 20th CENTURY was discontinued in 1967, leaving the BROADWAY, which has been operated continuously since then. Amtrak continued the train when it took it over from Penn Central on May 1, 1971. On Amtrak's first anniversary, May 1, 1972, the corporation rolled out its first completely refurbished train, the BROADWAY, to be christened by Gloria Swanson and greeted upon Chicago arrival by Mayor Richard J. Daley.

Our cover photo shows the last pre-refurbished Amtrak BROADWAY on Apr 30, 1972, running thru Washington Boro, PA with a number of yellow UP cars in the consist and drawn by black PC diesels that reflect yellow rays of the low sun. This was also the last combined BROADWAY LIMITED-NATIONAL LIMITED (from a color transparency by Fred Abendschein).



The following day the refurbished consist was brought out, along with red, platinum mist & blue GG-1 #902, seen here pulling the eastbound train at Lancaster PA on May 4, 1972 (Fred Abendschein photo). But within 3 years the train had deteriorated to the point that it was rated near the bottom of RTN's rating survey, and Amtrak's new president, Paul Reistrup, likened it to an "accommodation train." This month's event represents a renewed commitment by Amtrak to promote quality service on this "classic" train.

BUS ASSOCIATION TO GET NEW HEAD

The Washington Post reports that the National Association of Motor Bus Owners is selecting Arthur D. Lewis, chairman of the U.S. Railway Association, to succeed Charles Webb, who is retiring, as its head. As chairman of USRA, Lewis played a key role in setting up ConRail and in overseeing it. Lewis was also one of the original incorporators of Amtrak, and was previously an airline executive. The change comes at a time when NAMBO is approaching Congress for federal funds to keep intercity buses from going bankrupt, perhaps by setting up an Amtrak-like organization to assist them. The move evidently does not mean a lessening of the virulent anti-Amtrak attacks being launched by the bus industry, and a plan to put Amtrak fares under ICC control has been put forth by the bus people.

Rail Canada

WHILE TRANSPORT MINISTER Otto Lang continues to work greasing the skids under rail passenger service, it appears that other people are working to grease the skids under Otto Lang. Rumours continue regarding a possible cabinet shakeup in July. That Lang is feeling threatened was demonstrated dramatically on June 4, when lawyers for Lang threatened legal action on Regina and Saskatoon newspapers if they carried the "Canadian" magazine supplement for that date. The rotogravure magazine featured a page-one caricature of Otto Lang flying high over Ottawa astride a jet plane. Inside, he was pictured in unflattering terms as an opportunist with an inflated view of his own abilities. On the other hand, the writer depicted him as hard-working and the author of some well thought out legislation in fields other than transportation. The "Canadian" magazine was carried in other weekend newspapers across Canada, and it is likely that Lang's constituents will be avidly reading bootlegged copies from out-of-town newspapers to find out what was so bad that it had to be kept from them. Saskatchewan papers had plenty to worry about; unlike the U.S., Canada does not have the "fair comment" rule regarding political personalities, and newspapers here are very circumspect in discussing politicians' lives. It is common knowledge that Prime Minister Trudeau does not like to have "losers" around him, as a series of dismissed or "buried" ministers can testify. Ironically, Lang's desperate move to silence criticism may spotlight his weakening hold on the Transport portfolio.

FEDERAL-PRIVINCIAL CONSULTANTS' study recommending abandonment of rail passenger services to New Brunswick and Nova Scotia this month was characterized as "incompetent" and "a transparent snow job". The study was prepared by a special task force last winter but released only in mid-May as CTC hearings on Maritime rail service got underway. Roy Ellis of Regina, a director of the Saskatchewan Rail Committee, attacked the study as a deliberate attempt to rig the evidence in favour of air and bus service at the expense of rail. In a brief prepared at the request of the Maritime Rail Committee and endorsed by Transport 2000, Mr. Ellis drew attention to six major areas where the study ignored or misrepresented available data:

(1) Rail costs were not determined on the same basis as air and road--while rail services were charged part of the capital cost of existing physical plant, no part of the massive and mounting capital deficits for airports and highways were charged to the proposed new air and bus services.

(2) The report assumes that rail patrons will shift to buses; however, experience elsewhere shows that they will turn to energy-wasteful autos and planes.

(3) It claims that buses are invariably more energy-efficient than trains; however, the most modern trainsets have a much better potential for saving energy.

(4) It totally ignores comfort and safety--the factors in which rail excels. These, along with speed and price, are of prime concern to the traveling public.

(5) It treats rail improvement as excluding improvements to other modes, creating the false impression that better air and bus service is dependent on rail cutbacks. This contradicts Ottawa's own rhetoric about coordinating all modes.

(6) It asserts that rail ridership continues to decline. In fact, this trend has reversed quite decisively, based on the most recent figures.

Mr. Ellis was quick to acknowledge the need for good air and road transport in the region. "However, given the Maritimes' precarious energy situation and economic conditions, a revitalized rail network is absolutely essential," he said. Bus improvements should begin in areas not presently served by adequate public transport.

A MYSTERY SURROUNDS the sinking of the CN ferry "William Carson" June 2-3, reported here last issue. Norman Hinks, captain of the vessel, testified that it did not hit an iceberg, and the reasons for the ship's taking on water remained unknown. The "Carson" is classified as an icebreaker. Besides the 128 people aboard, all of whom were rescued, the ferry was carrying 44 vehicles and 900 tons of cargo. The sinking occurred off the coast of Southern Labrador.

CP RAIL has announced two additional fall Alaska cruises for the "Princess Patricia." The 7½-day trips, calling at Glacier Bay, four Alaska ports, and two B.C. ports, will depart Vancouver 8:30pm Sep 20 & 28. Write CP at Pier 8, Vancouver B.C. V6C 2R3, or call collect at (604) 665-2507/8.

APPEALS BY THE City of Sault Ste. Marie and members of parliament have extended CP Rail RDC service between The Soo and Sudbury, Ont., until Jun 15 (this run was listed in RTN's 1st May issue as discontinued May 23). CP says it is prepared to continue the service under contract to the Ontario Northland Transportation Commission, the Ontario Government, or any city along the route. R. M. McLearn of CP's legal dept. in Montreal said the company was not obligated to continue the service on its own after receiving CTC permission to discontinue. McLearn said patronage has averaged 9-10 persons per day since 1971 despite schedule changes & advertising.

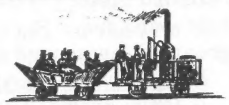
ONTARIO NORTHLAND RAILWAY'S newly-received ex-TEE trains began revenue runs Jun 9 after a press (and political) run May 28-29. Startup of service was scheduled for just before provincial elections. Two sets of 4-car trains provide the service, and two more sets will arrive later this year. The current VIA schedules show the units on a tight schedule with high equipment utilization. CN has insisted that the power unit lead, altho they are bidirectional, and to avoid turning the train in Toronto, the NORTHLANDER will arrive from one side of town and leave in the other direction looping around Lake Simcoe. The units are painted blue and yellow, a scheme different from the VIA treatment. The compartments on the former 1st class section have been retained, and local railfans are looking forward to this feature.

CN HAS ADDED "Dayniter" service to the Rapidos. Club 52, as it is known, costs an extra $5 Toronto-Montreal. The regularly-assigned Rapido consists appear to be all in VIA paint now. The coaches have been refurbished, and carpeting in earthy colors added.

"CN RETIREES SPECIAL" convention train replaced the regular 3-car RDC Niagara Falls-Toronto Jun 7. Consist seen at Niagara Falls was: engines 6763 (FPA-4 in VIA paint), 6539 (F9 in CN black & white); cars 9611 baggage, coaches 5389, 5383, 5402, 5227, 5226 (VIA), 5305 (VIA), 5181, 5428, 5430.

TRANSPORT CANADA WILL announce by Jun 30 which of 4 companies will be chosen to build new train equipment for the Quebec-Montreal run. The four are: Bombardier-MLW, Canadian Vickers, GM of Canada, and Budd Co.

Urban-Suburban Transit



CALIFORNIA'S TRANSPORTATION DIRECTOR Adriana Gianturco had some truthful, if unkind words to say about buses in the May issue of Mass Transit magazine: "Let's face it, buses in general just do not have a good public image." This, of course, is what is behind declines in Greyhound and Trailways patronage--not Amtrak. Ms. Gianturco also said: "...you get the image of public transportation as 'crummy old buses' that are late."

NEW YORK CITY'S Transit Authority is operating Nostalgia Trains Sats. & Suns. from Manhattan and Brooklyn to a subway exhibit, using 3 BMT Standard cars of 1915 vintage. Other old cars will also be run. Fare is $3 for adults, including the museum.

PRESIDENT JIMMY CARTER reportedly is naming Dick Page to head the DOT's UMTA. Some railfans are working to oppose the nomination.

VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA'S new harbour ferry service connecting the downtown CP Rail station with North Vancouver started regular runs 6am on June 17.

GETTING IN THE PIONEER SPIRIT
The Inaugural of Amtrak's New Train
by Glenn Lee

Three days of the PIONEER inaugural run from Seattle to Salt Lake City were nearing conclusion at Ogden, Utah in early evening. The temperatures had been in the 90s. Amtrak official Joe Vranich turned and said: "After three days of this I should really be tired. But I'm not. Look at the size of this crowd! Far out!"

This seems to typify the interest and enthusiasm for the new PIONEER trains between Utah and Washington State for both Amtrak personnel and many thousands of citizens along the route who braved very hot weather for a look at shiny new Amfleet cars, and a short trip thru the equipment at 15 stations to be served by the daily service over Union Pacific trackage.

The flawless inaugural run and the overwhelming good public reception bode only well for the 24-month experimental service. However, a number of flaws exist in the PIONEER package which may work against the new train unless corrective actions are made.

DATELINE PIONEER INAUGURAL - June 4:

As pickets from the bus industry walked outside Seattle's King Street station, a small group of officials welcomed the PIONEER into service. A six-car train of newly manufactured Amfleet cars, including 2 Amdinettes, pulled by two F40 locomotives, and bearing a PIONEER drumhead sign, waited as Sen. Warren G. Magnuson told the crowd of the importance of passenger train service to the U.S. Mrs. Germaine Magnuson, grasping a champagne bottle wrapped in a towel, hit the rear coupler square as she said to the flashbulbs "I christen thee the PIONEER."

At 9:32am, only moments later, the inaugural was underway on a nonstop run for Portland. The passenger list at this time was small, with most of the dignitaries and guests expected to ride between Oregon, Idaho and Utah points. As the train departed Portland at 1:38pm, an announcement from the P.A. system reminded passengers that they were becoming a part of railroad history--aboard the first passenger train to operate for the public eastbound from Portland in more than 6 years. There were cheers from the group in the second car, and one woman said in a loud voice, "It's about time!"

Hood River, Oregon: (Ar. 2:59pm, lv 3:31pm)

A large crowd, perhaps 700-900, gathered at the UP station for the train's arrival. An Amtrak "glass box" is to serve as the station, as UP has elected not to permit use of its elderly depot for passengers. The depot may be sold to the city sometime this year, and the city is free to negotiate use of the depot for Amtrak. Comments from the crowd were very positive, altho many senior citizens did not attempt to make a tour of the train (a walk thru two cars--an Amdinette and a 60-seat coach).

The Dalles: (Ar. 4:01pm, lv 4:41pm)

The coastal rain had been left behind, and hot weather was appearing. Once more, Amtrak must use a "glass box" for a station, as UP has demolished its former depot building. A crowd of perhaps 1200 enthusiastically received short remarks by local officials and Amtrak speakers. Much of the push for restoration of passenger service along the Columbia River has come from The Dalles, where there is concern about some of the Northwest's worst

THE PIONEER

winter-weather driving conditions along the I-80 freeway west to Portland.

Hinkle: (Ar. 6:09pm, lv 6:42pm)

Hinkle itself is a desolate railroad yard and depot, located in the proverbial middle-of-nowhere; and yet the platforms were crowded with over 1000 persons waiting thru increasing heat for a look at the train and a short walk thru it. Many of them were from nearby cities such as Hermiston and Stanfield, altho some were from the Tri-Cities area some 35 miles north. All facets of the operation here went like routine clockwork.

Pendleton: (Ar. 7:18pm, lv 8:08pm)

A crowd of over 3000 jammed the UP station area in Pendleton for arrival of the PIONEER. This represented one person for every 5 living in Pendleton --an enormous number braving the 90° heat on Saturday evening. The Mayor of Pendleton gave a short and seemingly heartfelt speech, and urged his fellow citizens to write letters of thanks to both Oregon senators for their work to restore the service. Altho the remarkable red brick Pendleton UP station is standing, UP has denied Amtrak use of the structure, and a "glass-box" waiting room has been constructed on the platform east of the depot.

A complimentary dinner from the Amdinette was served travelers leaving Pendleton, and arrival at La Grande, Oregon was 10:08pm without fanfare. The La Grande Chamber of Commerce arranged a van shuttle to take travelers to motels, and starting about 11pm hosted a cocktail party which was attended by more than 100 persons making the startup journey.

DATELINE PIONEER INAUGURAL - June 5:

La Grande: An extremely beautiful Sunday morning greeted travelers returning to the train for the 9am departure eastward. The train had drawn a smaller number of visitors after being opened to inspection at 8am, partially because additional festivities here had been set for June 8 when the first westbound train was to arrive on regular schedule.

Baker: (Ar. 10am, lv 10:45am)

A good crowd, perhaps 500, was on hand in the growing heat at the site of the former depot. A "glass-box" station has been erected here also. With a few others, I went inside to sit for a few minutes, and found temperatures ranging from hot to unbearable. Clearly the little, full-enclosed shelters will not be useful many months of the year. Amtrak official Joe Vranich was observed passing out timetables with all the gusto and enthusiasm of the most red-hot of college activists of the 1960s. The crowd seemed to love it. Being built west of Baker is the Sumpter Valley Railway narrow-gauge restoration project. At this time, one mile of track has been put down near McEwen, and about 5 more miles will be built soon. A total of 30 miles are envisioned, and steam locomotives from the White Pass & Yukon were recently shipped from Skagway en route to Baker. Will a Durango-Silverton-type attraction of Oregon someday draw the steam enthusiasts to Baker? There seems a good chance.

Ontario: (Ar. 1:53pm MDT, lv 2:36pm)

Over 4000 persons were on hand to cheer the arrival of the PIONEER, as temperatures nudged the 100 mark. Among those waiting here were Senator

and Mrs. Frank Church. Sen. Church addressed the crowd from a point near a large "Welcome Amtrak" banner. He received applause when he said that passenger trains were the most fuel-efficient form of transportation in America today. The crowd size represented one person for every 10 living in the Ontario-Payette-Nyssa area. Unfortunately, a "glass box" serves passengers, as UP's station is not open to train passengers.

Nampa, Idaho: (Ar. 3:17pm, lv 4:08pm)

Amtrak President Paul Reistrup, accompanied by his son John, aged 8 1/2, joined the group. He received applause when he announced that rebuilt Union Pacific sleeping cars, to be refitted for all-electric operation, will be added to the PIONEER in the fall. Sen. Church, now on his home ground, once again stressed fuel conservation of trains. Gov. John Evans of Idaho said much of the credit for train restoration goes to Dwight Jensen of the state's Amtrak committee. Police estimated the Nampa crowd at 3300 persons.

Boise: (Ar. 4:45pm, overnight stop)

A crowd of about 4000 was on hand at the Boise platform to welcome the inaugural, as the thermometer hovered near 100°. Remarks were short, and in some spots a little emotional. Mayor Dick Eardley of Boise touched a sentimental note when he said that it was wonderful that the beautiful railway station, which is so much a part of Boise, and which means so much to Boise, will once again echo with the happy sounds of travelers coming and going. Sen. Church built upon this theme when he told the crowd that without doubt the Boise depot is the most beautiful railway station in America. He then reminisced about the many trips to and from Boise he had made as a young man, and then later in public life--all thru the Boise station.

Joe McDonald, Amtrak's board member representing consumers, told Boise residents that this had been his first trip over the Oregon Short Line, and that once the word spread in the Eastern U.S. on how beautiful and scenic the route is, Idaho residents will have an increasingly difficult time obtaining reservations--as Easterners will snap up all the tickets!

The train's equipment was on exhibition until 6pm. However, at 9:30pm and later, almost 100 persons were roaming along the Boise platform and thru the depot waiting room, gazing in delight at both Amfleet's stainless steel and the intense, almost haunting beauty of the station and the station grounds. It was apparent that many Boise residents had never been inside the depot, and were enjoying this opportunity very much.

DATELINE PIONEER INAUGURAL - June 6:

Mountain Home: (Ar. 8:40am, lv 9:25am)

About 300-400 persons were waiting at trackside at Mountain Home on a cloudy Monday morning. The weather was humid, some rain having fallen during the night. A small "glass-box" shelter will serve the public, as the Mountain Home depot has been torn down. Sen. Church told the crowd that Amtrak represents a "good ride for the price." The Senator introduced his wife, Bethine, and said that Bethine had been as helpful as any in the work to have the trains returned. Then, obviously making reference to bus company pickets who had marched when the PIONEER had arrived in Boise, Sen. Church told his small audience that Amtrak had no grudge against bus companies, and that the train will be a success. He said the biggest transportation subsidies in the U.S. were to highway users; and that the PIONEER puts Idaho on the map and makes Idaho a part of the U.S. He concluded by urging that the public's input and ridership are necessary to make it a success.

Shoshone: (Ar. 10:47am, lv 11:28am)

Altho the Shoshone depot is still standing, UP has denied Amtrak use of the facility, and a "glass box" has been erected to the west. Sen. Church, apparently still irritated by bus picketing at Boise, told the crowd of 400 or so that the PIONEER was helping to develop a balanced transportation system in the U.S. Church also said that a balanced transportation system is a rising tide that "floats all the boats higher", and that bus companies will benefit from better train service, and that trains are not a threat to bus operators. Church then said that air travel is heavily subsidized; that bus lines are subsidized by highway spending, and told them: "Don't single out Amtrak to complain about government subsidies." Amtrak President Paul Reistrup said he had been congratulated on his first trip to Idaho by a cousin in nearby Twin Falls who had joined the group in Shoshone.

Pocatello: (Ar. 1:15pm, lv 2:15pm)

A crowd of 2-3000 met the train in very hot weather. There seemed much enthusiastic response in this major railroad town at having passenger service restored. The impressive Pocatello UP depot is being opened to public use, and will be a good intermodal transfer point, as the Greyhound bus depot is directly across the street, probably a leftover from the 1920s and 1930s when UP stages provided most intercity bus service in Southern Idaho. Police directed the bus company pickets away from UP property, and they thus walked the sidewalk in front of the bus station--in effect picketing their own facilities.

A few of the inaugural passengers thought it would be a good idea to determine if there actually had been a "Princess" Theater, which had been made famous in the Judy Garland-James Mason film "A Star Is Born" from the 1950s--in which Miss Garland had sung "I was born in a trunk, at the Princess Theater, in Pocatello, Idaho." The search for the theater had taken more time than the train riders had thought, and they were left behind when the PIONEER pulled out--having to make their way to Salt Lake City by 6pm Greyhound, wearing their "Get into the Pioneer Spirit" Amtrak T-shirts.

Brigham City, Utah: (Ar. 4:46pm, lv 5:29pm)

A crowd of 5-600 persons met the PIONEER inaugural in heavy heat. A "glass box" has been constructed north of the UP stone-block depot, which is still standing and in use. Many of the crowd were younger people, and the tour of the equipment produced long lines.

Ogden: (Ar. 5:59pm, lv 7:30pm)

Altho Ogden has had regular passenger train service from Amtrak continuously since 1971, a large crowd filled the platform at Ogden--perhaps 1000 or more persons. Inside, many architectural drawings outlined complete plans for revitalization of the Ogden depot to include a rail museum, train restaurants, community meeting rooms, and perhaps a streetcar route linking the depot and the downtown area several blocks to the east. Many visitors asked officials numerous questions about Amtrak and the service.

Salt Lake City: (Ar. 8:30pm)

A crowd of perhaps 1500 was on hand to welcome the inaugural at its final stop of the 3-day trip from Seattle. Hot weather continued, even at the late evening hour. Paul Reistrup reviewed the politics of the startup, and urged his listeners to work for eventual restoration of passenger service between Salt Lake City and Los Angeles via Las Vegas, the former CITY OF LOS ANGELES route. Interesting to many in the crowd was the cleaned-up Salt Lake UP depot, built in 1908. While the Boise depot is one of great and perhaps slightly understated beauty, the Salt Lake depot is almost all overstatement, but attractive in its own way--with the waiting room flanked by large oil paintings of Brigham Young leading Mormons to Salt Lake, and Leland Stanford driving the Golden Spike.

As the PIONEER participants spread to their varied destinations, almost all agreed that the organization and execution of the inaugural train had been flawless--a performance that even the most well-oiled of professional political campaigners could envy.

* * *

Whither the PIONEER?

Repeatedly on the PIONEER startup, officials stressed that the PIONEER is a 24-month experiment, and that public response must be good in order to have the runs continued as a permanent part of the Amtrak system. This makes the next two years critical for the train, and ways must be found by Amtrak, NARP, and others to overcome a number of subtle barriers to good performance which are necessary to insure the PIONEER's survival.

Speed: UP employee timetables from 1971 to 1977 have allowed a passenger train top speed of 79mph (the ICC limit for equipment without automatic train stop or cab signals) on the PIONEER route. Yet with introduction of the new train, top speed has been cut to 70mph by UP executive order. The supposed reason for this is that passenger trains must have 7 cars or more to go 79mph and the PIONEER will be operating with 3 or 4 cars. Amtrak brass repeatedly have suggested to UP that the 70mph restriction is for older equipment that does not have the track-hugging ability of Amfleet. UP's reply has been: "We don't know anything about your cars, but we do know our rulebook. The limit is 70mph." This restriction has meant some 90 extra minutes or more of running time between Portland and Salt Lake City, which hopefully can be removed from the schedule, perhaps in the fall, if UP is convinced that shorter trains will not bounce from the rails at higher speeds. This would mean, eastbound, a later Seattle departure, and an earlier arrival at Salt Lake, perhaps in time to connect eastbound with the RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR.

Dispatching: One UP employee, a reader of RTN, came to me on a depot platform en route to say that he was greatly concerned about shop-talk in his area--that many dispatchers he had spoken with since the PIONEER was announced had shown resentment for the new train, and had vowed to put the PIONEER trains in sidings for freights every time they could. My westbound trip on the PIONEER a few days later showed this policy may already be in effect.

Station Facilities: As my short "sit" in the glass-box station at Baker, Oregon, showed, the little shelter facilities will be completely inadequate during the months of warm weather. My belief is that the decision to build glass boxes was a "Lexan-type" decision--one which sounds great at the committee table, but in practice is almost worthless. The completely enclosed boxes produce an overall greenhouse effect for passengers whenever the sun is shining; and unfortunately there are no seats outside the shelters, nor any carport-type roof which might keep the sun off. The shelters are to be equipped with a time lock which turns on lights and heat and opens the doors one hour before train arrival, and shuts these off and locks the doors 45 minutes after train departure. That's probably not enough. In addition, many of the shelters are not built in "people places," and a passenger sitting alone has a good chance of being mugged. At Shoshone, Idaho, where the shelter is west of the depot, visibility is not good from the street--and both trains are due in early morning hours.

The practical solution from the passenger's standpoint is to have family or friends drive to the station site and wait in autos until the train arrives. This was actually what had happened at Brigham City when I made my return trip to Seattle on the PIONEER in regular service. The result is that all glass boxes cannot be used for any purpose other than to mark the place where the train stops Improvements to station facilities must be made to help insure traffice for the PIONEER.

Fares: Evidently PIONEER fares were constructed on a per-mile basis, which is equitable for the Seattle-Salt Lake portion. Yet perhaps half the passengers on the PIONEER may be destined to or from connecting trains, most prominently the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR via Ogden. However, it is much more expensive to travel from Chicago to Portland via SFZ and PIONEER than from Chicago to Seattle via EMPIRE BUILDER or NORTH COAST. The Chicago-Portland fare is

$154 coach one way. The Chicago-Seattle fare is $114 coach one way. This type of imbalance will retard business to and from the PIONEER east of Ogden, and will also result in overcrowding of BUILDER and NORTH COAST runs thru Seattle. Revisions in the initial fare structure are needed, and soon.

Connections: Returning to Seattle from Grand Junction, Colorado, I found that neither Rio Grande nor Amtrak was interested in making connections, which will be a great key to PIONEER patronage. The westbound RGZ was about 75minutes late, arriving in Salt Lake at 10:38pm. The PIONEER would not wait, and left on time for Ogden and Seattle at 10:15pm on the first day the two trains were to connect. However, the SFZ, train 5 westbound was late, and the PIONEER was held at Ogden. When I called Amtrak in Ogden from the Salt Lake Rio Grande depot, I was told I could take the Rio Grande van to Ogden, but there would be no guarantee that the PIONEER would wait for the van. While I was on the phone, the van departed, and I was forced to lay over 23 1/2 hours in Salt Lake City for the next day's PIONEER. Needless to say, once word of this poor performance gets around, there will be little or no connecting business except among the adventuresome.

Train Facilities: Amfleet cars of the 60-seat variety will be acceptable for this service, especially now that the fixed armrests have been removed from between the seat pairs, and since curtains have been installed to serve as shades. However, airline-style Amdinette food will not be acceptable for patrons on board almost 24 hours. No passenger is aboard a U.S. airliner for that length of time; and airline patrons easily can eat well before or after a flight to make up for light airline-style food. Not so with train patrons. Once bi-level equipment is delivered, existing conventional dining cars could be equipped for all-electric operation to permit regular dining service on the PIONEER. With the large amounts of good scenery along the Columbia River and over the Blue Mountains, a dome car will soon be a "must." The CITY OF PORTLAND, for example, regularly carried three dome cars.

Ticketing: Between Portland and Salt Lake, only the Boise station sports Amtrak ticket agents. At other locations, tickets must be purchased from travel agents or on the train. There are no baggage handling facilities. For some passengers, especially those going long distances or making connections to other trains, the lack of Amtrak agents will be a discouragement to building patronage. It appears that the most obvious solution is to have UP employees at many of the smaller depots sell tickets; but thus far, apparently, this has not been an easy solution for either Amtrak or UP.

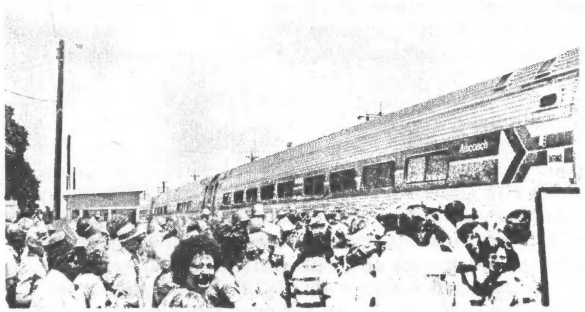
An integral part of passenger train service is the ticketing and depot waiting room facility, and this must be recognized as one of the important determinants of patronage, so far lacking along the PIONEER route.

Lexan: The Amfleet cars assigned to the PIONEER were manufactured in March and April of this year, and include Lexan as the inner pane and safety glass as the outer pane in each window. I found one pane in my car (21860) in which the Lexan was on the outside. Already the Lexan had deteriorated, creating dim viewing, and at night showing large glows around lights outside the train.

Schedule: The PIONEER's schedule and route are its saving grace. The former UP passenger service from Oregon and Idaho operated to Denver. There was either no connection, or a useless close connection, between the CITY OF PORTLAND and the southbound BUTTE SPECIAL at Pocatello for Salt Lake. Northbound, the connections from Salt Lake via Butte Special to the PORTLAND ROSE were much worse. The new route will be of great interest to many of the Mormon faith traveling back and forth to Salt Lake City and Brigham Young University at Provo from Oregon and Idaho.

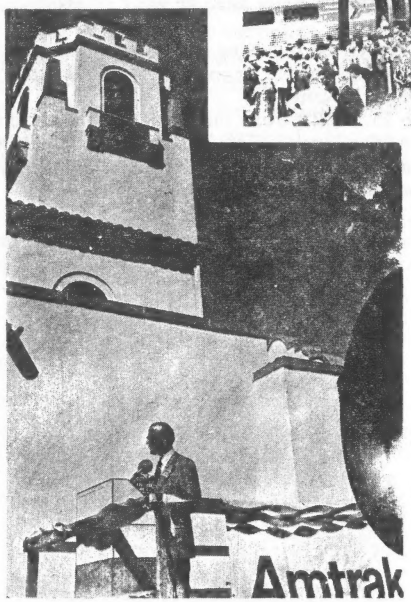
Yet the schedule must be speeded, allowing for a later departure northbound at Salt Lake, and the earlier arrival southbound. My trip on a revenue westbound train showed "fat" in the schedule. There was a 10-minute unscheduled stop at Huntington, Oregon, to avoid being ahead of time. After an on-time stop at Hood River westbound, arrival in Portland was 4:39pm, rather than 5:10pm as the schedule shows, for the 5:30pm departure for Seattle. If arrivals are to be in Portland westbound about 4:40pm, this should be shown on the schedule to allow "faster" running times in the public's mind for the La Grande-Portland, and Pendleton-Portland markets, for example.

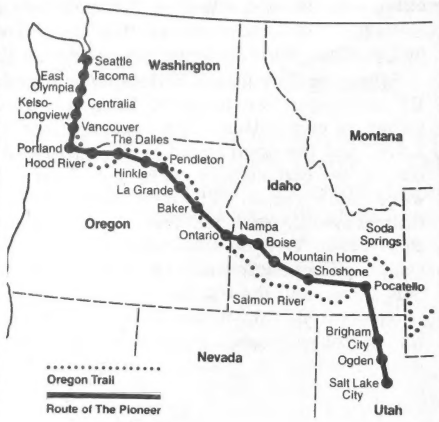
THE PIONEER



Amtrak

PHOTOS BY GLENN LEE



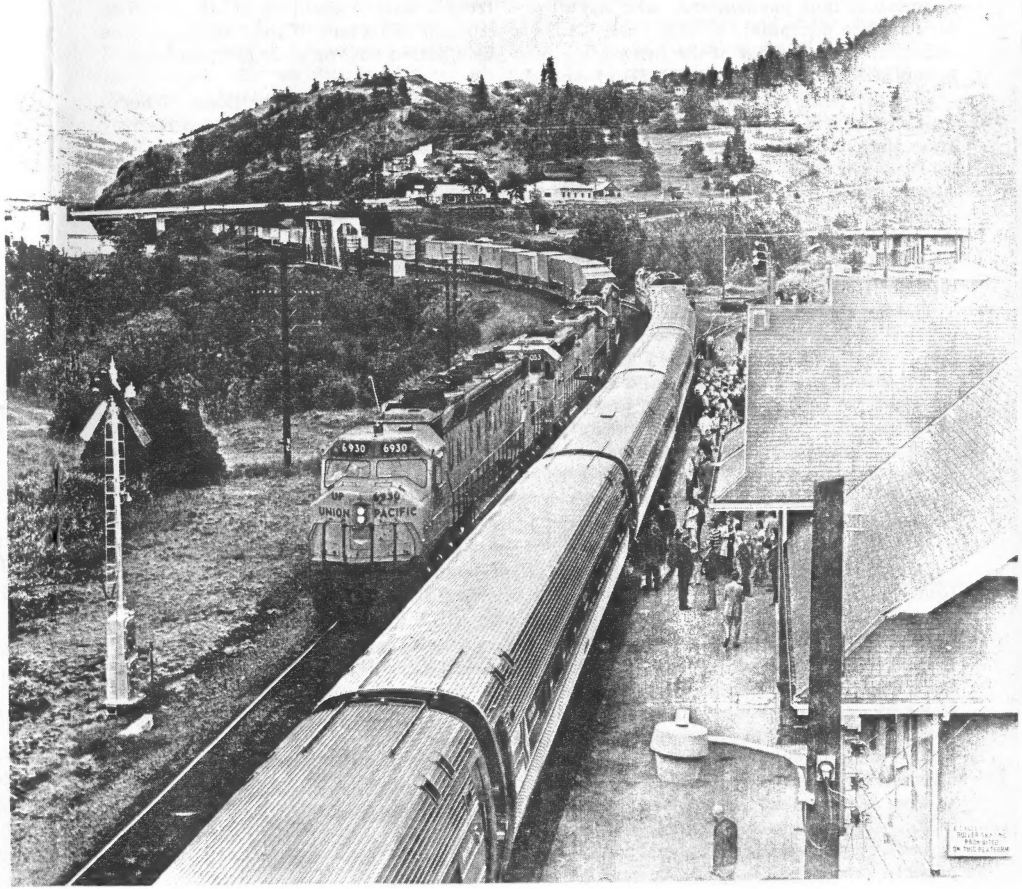


(Opposite page:) Top photo--at Ontario, Oregon, a crowd of nearly 4000 persons crowded the UP depot to greet the inaugural PIONEER on June 5, and to hear Senator Frank Church of Idaho introduce the new train. Middle--the inaugural PIONEER on display at Hood River, Oregon, on June 4. Many senior citizens were among the crowd drawn to the train. Amtrak's "glass-box" station, used at many PIONEER stops, is visible in the photo. Bottom--Amtrak President Paul Reistrup addresses a crowd of 4-5 thousand persons at the station platform at Boise Idaho on June 5 in near 100° heat. His words were momentarily interrupted by the Westminster Chime of the clock in the handsome depot tower. A few moments earlier, Senator Frank Church had called the depot the "most beautiful railroad station in America."

(Below:) The inaugural PIONEER train on display at the Hood River, Oregon, stop on June 4, as a westbound Union Pacific freight rolls past the eastbound Amfleet equipment. The UP has denied Amtrak use of this depot.

Consist of the inaugural train was: engines 226, 219 (F40's); Amdinette 20232, Amcoaches 21862 & 21860, Amdinette 20233, Amcoaches 21863 & 21177. Consist of the first eastbound revenue train was: engines 215, 217 (F40's); Amcoaches 21866 & 21849, Amdinette 20231, Amcoaches 21859 & 21108, Amdinette 20221. Two cars and one engine were dropped in Portland, as train 26 continued to Salt Lake with engine 217 and the first 4 cars listed. The dropped equipment (engine 215, cars 21108 & 20221) became PIONEER train 25 Portland-Seattle that afternoon (June 7), the final PIONEER to originate in Portland.

Amtrak put out a brown-&-green brochure from which artwork in this article is taken.



Politics: Anyone involved in carrying passengers is up to his eyeballs in politics, and for the PIONEER operation, the rule remains unchanged. Mrs. Bethine Church had told me on the inaugural run that she had helped fight UP for almost 6 years in unrecorded skirmishes concerning UP's desire to tear up the Orchard line, the 24-mile route connecting Boise to the main line southeast, which is used only for passenger trains, and which has been idle since May 1, 1971. The gist of her conversation seemed to be that much future vigilance will be necessary to insure continued operation of the PIONEER.

This reflects somewhat on political life in Idaho 6 years ago, when the state's congressional delegation did not have the clout that Sen. Mike Mansfield of Montana had shown when Mansfield was able to restore passenger service thru Southern Montana within a few weeks after Amtrak's startup. Idaho did not have such powers then, but apparently does now. One spectator at Ontario, Oregon, had said: "I can't stand Senator Church for his foreign policy, but sure love him for the trains."

* * *

WESTWARD HO! ON BOARD THE PIONEER

My return trip to Seattle began at Grand Junction, Colorado on June 9. This was to be a short visit to the RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR operation, and to allow me to make the first westbound connection from the RGZ to the PIONEER in Salt Lake.

Rio Grande has been uncooperative to the extreme with Amtrak regarding the PIONEER. Rio Grande vetoed any discussion of a joint depot in Salt Lake, and apparently will make no efforts to expedite connections between the trains. Many of the PIONEER inaugural crowd, including Rogers E. M. Whitaker, had planned to ride RGZ eastbound on June 7. A slight derailment of a freight east of Glenwood Springs on the westbound trip June 6 had delayed the train, which arrived in Grand Junction (minus passengers, who were bused from Dotsero) about 9pm. Rather than forward the equipment to Salt Lake for the eastbound departure of the 7th, a bus was substituted, and most of the intending passengers bailed out for planes or the eastbound SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR at Ogden.

On June 9 the RGZ was also late due to a derailment--this one near Bond. There was no interest among the crew in contacting Amtrak at Salt Lake City to let them know they had a connecting passenger. We arrived at 10:38pm, after I had been told that the PIONEER would not be held. At that time I discovered that SFZ westbound was to be late at Ogden, and when I asked the Ogden agent if the PIONEER also would be held, he said: "I can't guarantee it." When I went from the depot to the van for Ogden, I found it had already departed, and I was forced to spend the next 23 1/2 hours in Salt Lake. Tales of this sort by trapped passengers are guaranteed not to increase business from connections.

The next evening I reached the Salt Lake UP depot about 9:30pm. I had found earlier in the day that about 4 days each week the ticket office does not open until 3pm. As a result, there was a line at the window, but departure was on time at 10:15pm. The train had boarded about 30 passengers, and all was quiet and relaxed on board. The directional lights for "Exit" and "cafe" were in error as to direction, but soon were turned off. Arrival at Ogden was a little behind schedule, but we were due to wait for over a half hour. As on the previous night, westbound SFZ #5 was late, and the PIONEER was to linger despite a strong statement: "This train doesn't wait for any other train" by the coach attendant. One reason for the delay was very clear--UP business car 111 on the rear of SFZ was to be switched to the PIONEER at Ogden for travel to Nampa, Idaho!

Departure from Ogden was 11:46pm from the first station track, and SFZ followed us out a few minutes later from the second track. The PIONEER was 38 minutes late. At Brigham City, departure was 12:15am after boarding about 5 passengers. We were then 25 minutes late.

We crept along at 12mph in the Bear River Canyon, and the night operator at the hydroelectric station stepped outside to his balcony above the turbine discharge pipes to watch us move past, the strobe light on the F40 lighting up the canyon for hundreds of yards on either side.

Arrival at Pocatello was 2:14am, or one minute early--a nice contrast to the 38 minutes of lateness at Ogden; and a definite indication that the schedule could be speeded, or that the PIONEER could be held at Salt Lake for tardy westbound RGZ trains without great damage to timekeeping. We boarded another 15 or so passengers at Pocatello, shortly after a young UP employee left his seat opposite

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mine yelling in a loud voice "EVERYBODY OFF FOR PORTLAND - HA HA HA!" He had been drinking steadily since departure from Salt Lake.

With about 50-60 passengers on board, the trip thru the night was uneventful, and arrival and departure from Boise were on time, with another 10 or so joining the train there. Several more boarded at Nampa, many of them junketing railway buffs en route to La Grande or Pendleton for a day roundtrip on the new train.

Travelers may be interested to note that there is a free beach near milepost 531, a few miles south of the Snake River crossing at Rock Island, where the railway fill creates a small lagoon slowly being filled in by an advancing sand dune.

Arrival in Huntington, Oregon was 10 minutes prior to the 8:50am departure. Shortly after, the PIONEER was delayed about 8 minutes waiting for an eastbound freight to clear. I walked thru the train at this point and counted 75 passengers. At Weatherby siding, there was a 5-minute delay as the PIONEER entered the siding for an eastbound freight of 4 units, headed by #3233. We rounded the big horseshoe curve between Durkee and Oxman at 9:37am, and headed up the grade. A rail photographer was pacing the train in a car, apparently making photos of the startup runs. Departure from Baker was on time, and we met two eastbound freights in sidings for the PIONEER, one 10:47am at Telocaset, the other at 11:02 am at Union Junction. Arrival in La Grande was 3 minutes early, and departure was on time. A small, hand-lettered sign on the "city side" doors to the La Grande waiting room said: "Buy Amtrak tickets at Magic Carpet Travel," giving the phone number.

UP is expanding its track capacity between La Grande and Pendleton over the Blue Mountains, and PIONEER operations should benefit. The track plant is very busy several times each day. Additional double track is planned at the summit, and sidings are being lengthened in several locations.

There was a slight delay for an eastbound freight at the west end of the double track near Ross, and all was well descending the west (north) slope of the Blue Mountains, until we reached Gibbon siding at 12:04pm, and entered the siding to wait several minutes. At 12:12pm an eastbound local freight with loco 3056, five cars and a caboose passed; and we returned to the main line at 12:13pm, for a total delay of probably 10 minutes or more.

The conductor said there were 78 paying passengers on board leaving La Grande. Arrival was 6 minutes late at Pendleton, and departure 8 minutes late. Departure from Hinkle was 7 minutes late at 1:27pm. At 2:13 the eastbound PIONEER was in the siding at Blalock with four cars, one more than usual. Departure from The Dalles was 4 minutes late, and on-time performance was re-established at Hood River, where departure was 3:25pm. Arrival in Portland was 4:39pm for the advertised 5:10pm arrival, which meant a 51-minute wait for thru passengers there.

I asked the conductor if I could go into the station to buy a newspaper and return to the train. He said I could probably get into the depot, but I would not be let back out on the platform until passengers from Portland to Seattle were ready to board. I elected to remain in my seat. An 84-seat Amcoach was switched to the PIONEER at Portland, bringing the consist up to 4 cars. Crew members say this will become a regular policy, to allow some seats for passengers boarding northbound at Portland. The car is to return to Portland each morning at 7:30.

The PIONEER ride is good, and many passengers who are content with Amdinette meals will find the train ride a pleasant experience in almost every respect. With proper promotion and advertising of departure times and fares, Amtrak should have no difficulty in establishing healthy growth records for the PIONEER service.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"This Administration firmly believes that rail passenger service will continue to play an important role in the Nation's transportation system. We are aware that there have been serious differences in the past between Congress and the Executive Branch concerning Amtrak and we are working to establish a more constructive and effective relationship. The Secretary of Transportation, Brock Adams, has taken the lead in this effort. As a statutory member of Amtrak's Board of Directors, it is his intention to pursue policies which will assure that rail passenger transportation continues to serve an important role."

--White House letter to NARP, May 5.

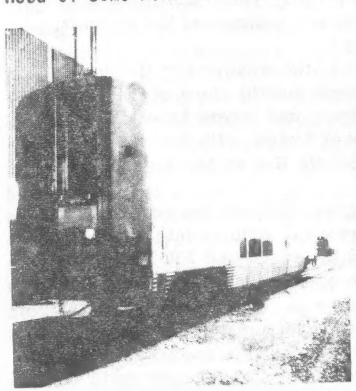
FIRST BI-LEVEL COACH GOES FOR TESTING

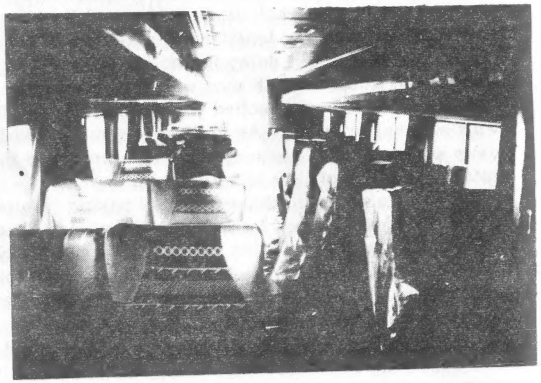
by Michael Davis

One of Amtrak's first new bi-level coaches, car 34002, was moved late in May to the Dept. of Transportation's Test Center near Pueblo, Colorado (see CARS & CONSISTS, last issue). Viewed from outside, this type of car strongly resembles the ex-Santa Fe hi-level cars. However, the windows seem larger and are darkly tinted. The corrugations on the stainless steel sides are different, placed to facilitate painting of Amtrak's striped color scheme, in which the new car was painted. The trucks, painted black, show their European ancestry, and give the impression of being less rugged than the conventional outside swinghanger types.

In the interior, the upper level has the now-familiar carpeting on floors and walls, in light gray. Seats appear similar to those in Amcoaches, but have large adjustable leg rests. Two upholstery patterns were observed in this car, different from Amfleet cars, in shades of tan, orange-brown, and brown with some gray. There are curtains on the windows, in the same orange-brown found on the seats. The result seems quite tasteful, less striking than the refurbished conventional cars. The colors look as if they will hold up better to dirt and grime.

There was a solid overhead baggage rack with reading lights, etc. The upper level seemed reminiscent of a wide-body jet plane. The bulkheads seemed too plain and in need of some kind of decoration.





Left--exterior view of car 34002 at the DOT's Pueblo facility. Right--interior view of upper level of the coach. Photos by the author.

The seats and upholstery in the car were covered with protective plastic, and many rocks were strewn about the car. These evidently came from sacks of rocks placed in the car to simulate the weight of passengers during ride quality testing.

On the lower level were seats in one end and rest rooms in the other. The seats had one of the two material patterns, with light tan, gray and orange-brown predominating. Again, the bulkhead, in a darkish carpeting, needed some adornment. The first rest room, for handicapped persons, had a larger door.

The car compared very favorably with the Santa Fe hi-levels, from which they so obviously derive. If the remaining body types are as good, they will be a welcome relief from the old veterans that compose the consists of trains like the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR. I look forward to my first ride on a train made up of these cars.

Reader Bert Barry calculates that single-level cars would be a cheaper investment for Amtrak. If 60-seat coaches and European-style sleepers holding 35 were used, 3 such would hold 180 and 105 passengers, respectively, compared to 154 and 90 for two bi-levels, and would cost $1,709,100, compared to $1,705,800 for two bi-levels. Thus the investment per passenger would be lower with single-levels.

Mixed Train of Thoughts

AUTO-TRAIN CORPORATION has received ICC approval of its new half-fare children's rates. These took effect Jun 15. Other fares changed too: cost of carrying a car went from $175 to $159, and adult fares went from $35 to $44. Children from 2-12 will be charged $22, except during the heavy Christmas and Easter holidays. Auto-Train is also asking the ICC for authority to institute a half-off 10-day round-trip fare on the Louisville-Sanford run..... SOME GOOD THINGS are being reported on Amtrak rails these days--apparently the corporation is listening to complaints voiced in RTN and elsewhere: the fixed armrests between Amfleet seats are being removed, and curtains are being placed at the windows. Amtrak apparently is adopting a "get-tough" policy toward employees who elicit passenger complaints: reportedly, out of 130 hearings held on complaints about on-board employees, 128 employees were dismissed or re-assigned..... OUR EASTERN READERS should have time to observe the last runs of the remaining Railway Post Office cars that still run between NY and Washington. The Postal Service will not continue the contract for the NY and Washington RPO beyond Jun 30. Stamp collectors can obtain a special cachet for the occasion (we don't have the details). Amtrak operated this service, altho when we asked Amtrak about it a while back, a spokesman knew nothing of its existence.....

* * *

LATEST STATUS SYMBOL among railroading magazines is to have a reader in Antarctica. Both Trains and Railroad magazines in their July issues publish a photo of railfan William T. Morgan reading their respective magazines in the Antarctic snow. RTN also has a reader (not Mr. Morgan) who is, or was, at the South Pole.....

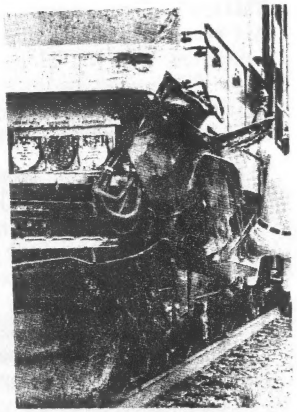
A REPORT ON the recent tests of Amtrak's SDP40F locomotives will apparently not be available for some time yet. However, a representative of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers who was along on the Minneapolis-Seattle test runs on BN has stated that he believes there is a "strong possibility" that the engines will be found to be faulty, as charged previously by some railroad engineers.....

A LOCAL RUMOR going the rounds says that Amtrak wants to put a parlor car on the COAST STARLIGHT on the Oakland-L.A. leg..... OAKLAND-SACRAMENTO CORRIDOR service, planned to begin July 1 with the opening of the Richmond CA Amtrak transfer station, has been delayed, thanks to SP. The railroad, in a move apparently designed to stall or block the new Oakland-Sacramento train, sent Amtrak a lengthy letter in which it detailed a number of demands calculated to harass the rail corporation--such things as requiring Amtrak to prove that the environment would benefit from the new train service, with origin and destination counts of auto traffic on highway 80 over the next two years, and proof that Greyhound ridership would not suffer as a result of more train service. SP also claimed that with the proposed train making 8 trains daily on its Oakland-Martinez line, and with about 22 freights a day, the line was getting up to capacity, and Amtrak would have to promise not to add any more runs. Amtrak seems to think it has the matter in hand now, and hopes to start the service in September. Many thanks to "the fiendly Southern Pacific" (to use columnist Herb Caen's term) for making us use that blasted highway even longer. Any time a public agency tries to deal with it, the SP kicks and screams. Do you suppose it kicked and screamed when the government said it would give it all that land for its railway back in the 19th century? Maybe we should take it back.....

* * *

THE DUTCH TRAIN hijacked by terrorists at 9:10am on May 23 near Glimmen was recaptured by Dutch troops in the pre-dawn hours of Jun 11 in a fierce attack that saw 6 of the terrorists and 2 of the hostages aboard killed. News photos showed that the electric train was of the type pictured in color on RTN's 2nd Feb cover. The train was a sorry mess--windows broken and body riddled with bullets. It was towed away a few hours later by a diesel locomotive..... AMTRAK'S FREE FARES for children on some routes, noted last issue, are being publicized by "free kiddy ride coupons" in newspaper ads. The coupons are good daily except July 1-4, Sept 2-5, Oct 7-10, Oct 21-24, and Nov 23-27. The promotional program runs thru November.....

THE COAST STARLIGHT being readied for southbound departure at Seattle Jun 15 was rammed by a locomotive (presumably a BN loco) while workers were under the cars. Reportedly the work crew escaped without serious injury, but one or two of the train's cars were damaged, and the train was set back 2 hours--one hour after it had left and a faulty brake connection was discovered. Oakland arrival was at 9:35am, where a pair of ex-SP articulated coaches and a third engine were added. Our periodic observations indicate the train has been frequently late by an hour or more at Oakland (southbound) since the summer season began. Reader E. Harry Beltzig reports missing his connection with the SOUTHWEST LIMITED Jun 14 when the train was 2½ hrs late at Salinas (1 3/4 hrs the day before that), and we found it an hour late at Oakland on Jun 17. Two Amtrak people told Mr. Beltzig that they are not responsible for connections of less than 30 mins, but are responsible for connections of more than an hour. What about connections of between 30 and 60 minutes? The STARLIGHT-SOUTHWEST LTD connection is 35 minutes. Mr. Beltzig says "The missing 30 mins is interpreted by Amtrak personnel unilaterally according to whim or the state of their digestion".....



THE NORTHBOUND PALMETTO, train 90, was in a collision with a small tractor and trailer just south of Lucama NC on Jun 12 at 1:30pm. The tractor operator survived, but his wife, riding in the trailer, was killed. There was an estimated $10,000 damage to the Amtrak F40-type engine. The adjoining photo of the damaged engine is by Jimmie Smith, reprinted from the Wilson (NC) Daily Times.....

HERE'S MORE INFORMATION about the Railway Post Office cars mentioned on page 17: two nightly mail trains numbered 3 & 4 by Penn Central became Amtrak's responsibility when it took over the NE Corridor last year. The trains are still running with 2 RPOs in each consist--the last RPOs operating in the U.S. The trains also carry baggage and express cars on their NY-DC route, and Jun 30 will truly see the end of an era when they are terminated.....

SEVERAL READERS ASKED what would become of their subscription payments to the publishers of the planned Amtrak on-board magazine after the publisher went out of business and the magazine didn't appear. Amtrak tells us that subscribers who paid will automatically get the new magazine now being planned unless they indicate otherwise. If you want a refund instead, write to: Mr. H. T. Brettelle, Manager of Sales Promotion, Amtrak Marketing Dept., 955 L'Enfant Plaza North, S.W., Washington DC 20024. Plans for the new magazine are still somewhat indefinite, apparently.....

* * *

AMTRAK WILL ANNOUNCE while this issue is in the mail that it has now received the last of its order of 492 Amfleet cars..... STEAM TRAIN ENTHUSIASTS will be interested in the forthcoming Sept issue of Trains magazine, which promises a full-color centerfold of engine 4449 together with SR's 4501, 610, and 722..... NEW RAILROAD PASSENGER associations are being formed: (1) The Illinois Assoc. of RR Psgrs is holding a formative meeting Jun 25 at 10:30am at Chicago's Midland Hotel. Info from Mike Morrison at (312) 764-6259 evenings. (2) A Houston chapter of the Texas ARP (Box 61102, Houston TX 77208) was organized at a public meeting Jun 1. President James Hofmeister, an economist with a Houston-based oil company, notes that the new group is not a cluster of "rail buffs" but a group who see the train as an under-utilized, comfortable vehicle in an age of needed fuel efficiency. The next meeting is at 7pm Jul 20 in the Meeting Room of the Houston Central Library, 500 McKinney Ave. (3) The Rail Passenger Association of the Southwest (RPAS) was recently formed, to cover Arizona, New Mexico and some surrounding areas. It plans to give early attention to these aims: (A) daily SUNSET LTD service; (B) re-establishment of the Golden State route or portions thereof; (C) Phoenix-Tucson "corridor" service; (D) north-south service in Arizona & New Mexico; and (E) tourist

rail service on the old ATSF line to Grand Canyon. Membership is open to any active NARP member. Info from: RPAS, Box 32041, Phoenix AZ 85016. All three of these organizations are associated with NARP..... TRAINS ARE RELAXING: Now we have medical evidence, being shown in ads by British Rail (seen in the Illustrated London News, May). Medical researchers from Leeds University recorded the heart rates of men traveling from Leeds to London by highway or by train. The car passengers averaged 93 beats per minute, with peaks up to 140 bpm when stressful highway situations occured. The rail passengers maintained a normal resting level, averaging 72bpm, with a maximum of 80. Says the ad: "medical research shows that when you travel by InterCity, you're faced with a great deal less stress and strain"..... THE READER'S DIGEST'S editor replied to a rail supporter's complaints about that anti-Amtrak article in the April Digest, denying that the authors' trip was planned with a bias. The editor agrees with the authors in taking that now-familiar Brinegar-Coleman DOT line that Amtrak should concentrate on the passenger-heavy corridors. The old notion that long distance passenger trains are "money-losers" dies hard.....

* * *

WHEN THE PIONEER got underway this month, Amtrak's VP-Marketing Alfred A. Michaud rode the first eastbound revenue run Seattle-Tacoma and spoke to the press in Seattle. He was en route around the world on a part-business, part-vacation trip which includes a visit to the Japanese National Railways and a ride on the Trans-Siberian Railway. Michaud told Seattle reporters that he was perplexed at Greyhound's picketing of the new train: "Sure, we're subsidized...but so is anyone who drinks a glass of milk or mails a letter, or uses public streets." Amtrak has put out some very nice promotional material for the new train, including a cartoon ad that reads "Now leave your covered wagon home", picturing a harassed motorist in an auto breakdown as a sleek Amtrak train glides by. "Hitch up with Amtrak's new Amfleet along the Oregon Trail." The concept of pioneering, and of covered wagons and the Oregon Trail are seen in this material, reaching nicely into Northwestern symbolism. The media gave good coverage to the new train. The Idaho Statesman (Boise) reported that the engineer who piloted the inaugural train into Boise was Elwood Payne of Pocatello, a UP road foreman and assistant trainmaster who was on one of the last UP passenger runs on May 1, 1971. An Oregonian editorial (Portland) criticized the cost of the promotion Amtrak was doing, noting that each passenger is already subsidized by about $21. But two days earlier the paper noted that Amtrak will mean much to the economy of the communities it serves, and "it should be welcomed with blaring bands and cheering citizens." A late report on PIONEER ridership as we go to press reveals that the 3 train consists in operation are carrying up to 120 passengers each at some point on the route..... ENTERTAINER DEAN MARTIN rode the BROADWAY LIMITED from Washington to Chicago on Jun 5 aboard the private car "Pennsylvania" owned by George Pins..... DELAWARE AND HUDSON PA engines, now no longer in passenger service, are being used as follows: #18 and #19 are used daily on freights north from Whitehall to Rouses Point NY, or south to Colonie NY; #16 & 17 are working out of Colonie NY daily. The two "sharks" are kept at Whitehall and usually work two freights daily from Whitehall to Rutland VT. According to the Wall Street Journal (Jun 17) the D&H is trying to ease its money problems by pulling out of its freight service to the Oak Island Terminal near Newark NJ. Shippers are worried that loss of D&H service in the New York area would leave only ConRail, while state and city officials have been trying to promote rail competition there...

* * *

AMTRAK'S EXPERIMENTAL SERVICE to Aberdeen MD has been doubled as of Jun 12. Trains 170 & 173 had been stopping there, and now train 67 gives additional southbound service and #182 stops northbound. Train 182 is run daily, not just Mon-Fri as the May 1 nationwide timetable indicates. The Aberdeen station will be renovated soon, with joint city-county-Amtrak funds, and Aberdeen will soon be installing rail passenger station highway signs..... LATE NEWS FLASH: The ICC has ruled against Amtrak in a case regarding incentive payments to railroads for service Amtrak deems inadequate. The case, concerning MoPac's T&P division, could mean higher Amtrak costs of $80-100 million/yr if applied to all railroads, Amtrak said.....

"DEL MONTE" SUPPORTERS passed around 7500 questionnaires to residents of the Monterey (CA) Peninsula and have so far gotten back about 2500 responses. Of these, 2309 said they would use the restored Monterey-San Francisco train, and 135 would not. Edgar H. Haber, chairman of the Committee to Restore Rail Service Monterey to San Francisco considers this strong support for a revival. The Senate Finance Committee has voted to provide funds for the train, but the full Senate has not yet voted on the measure..... THE BUS INDUSTRY "does have problems, but it is not in a crisis situation" Ass't Sec'y of Transportation Chester Davenport told the Senate Surface Transportation Subcommittee on Jun 16. He said that there is adequate time to explore with the industry and Congress the full range of alternative actions that could be taken. He said that a major reason for the financial problems of the intercity bus industry has been high inflation combined with delayed and inadequate fare relief..... SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR this summer (Jun 15-Aug 15) gets a reduced rate round trip fare ($1 over one-way fare) from points on the SFZ route to Elko/Carlin or Winnemucca NV..... VIRGINIA AND TRUCKEE RR at Virginia City NV opened its second season of operation on May 28, and will run 11 25-minute steam trips daily thru the summer..... JUNE 12 TIMETABLE changes affect primarily the Northeast Corridor. There are some trains dropped, some added, and some rescheduled. Two timetables have been reported so far--one for Washington-Boston and one for Harrisburg-NY. We neglected to mention before that Southern Railway issued a timetable Apr 24..... THE LATEST COOK International Timetable (May 22-Jun 30 issue) carries the full summer services for the Continent except for a few not available at press time. The book explains how to travel from Paris to Istanbul in the absence of the ORIENT EXPRESS--there are three ways. Single copies are $7.50 ($9.50 air) to U.S. and Canada from: Thos. Cook Ltd, Timetable Publ. Office, PO Box 36, Peterborough PE3 6SB England..... DEPT. OF CORRECTIONS: New Jersey DOT's GG-1 locos 4880 & 4883 are painted in PRR Brunswick green but have one wide gold stripe, not 5 pinstripes. Others like this are Amtrak 929 and ConRail 4803, 4808, 4825, 4828, 4840, 4844, and 4891. Trains magazine (July) lists 19 different paint schemes found at some time on GG-1s. The Silverliner IV pictured on p.5 last issue is actually a Jersey Arrow III currently being placed in service on NY-Trenton and South Amboy lines to replace the last of the P70s & MP54s..... FIRST NAMED TRAIN in NY-Philadelphia clocker service appears in the Jun 12 timetables--the JOHN ADAMS, train 187, lvs NY 12:01am, ar Phila 1:55am....

AMTRAK'S TRUCKEE (CA) STATION will be unmanned Jun 16-Dec 14, then manned again for the ski season to Apr 15..... FOR FASTER TELEPHONING to Amtrak's toll-free numbers, avoid the hours of 9am-1pm and 5-9pm, Amtrak says. Lines are open 24 hrs..

RAIL FANTRIPS

Jul 23-24: one-time only Chessie excursion. Atk Turbo to Milwaukee, overnight Chessie cross-Lake Michigan ferry to Ludington MI. Chessie 4-8-4 #2101 steam trip Grand Rapids-Chicago. $49.95. Champagne party on boat, breakfast. SASE to: Unirail, Box A3258, Chicago IL 60690. Space limited.

VIA CN steam excursions Sats. Jun 4-Sep 24, Weds. Jul 6-Aug 31: 2½-hr RT from Niagara Falls CN station, $5 all. Runpasts, snack bar, open baggage. Reservations necessary; phone 358-5795 in Niagara Falls.

Sep 1-5: NRHS 1977 Convention, Roanoke VA. Large number of trips & excursions. Info: Roanoke Chapter - NRHS, Box 13222, Roanoke VA 24032.

One special Fantrips listing is free, subject to our editing. Send full info to: Rail Travel News, Fantrips Dept, PO Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

Watch these pages for announcement of the appearance soon of RTN's long-delayed first Rail Travel Yearbook. Thank you!

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT: Due to RTN's summer vacation schedule, the next issue will appear sooner than usual, and the following a little later. Here is the planned mailing schedule of the next two RTNs: Second Jun issue, July 1; First July, Jul 25.

RTN'S TRAIN RATING FORM

NAME & ADDRESS:

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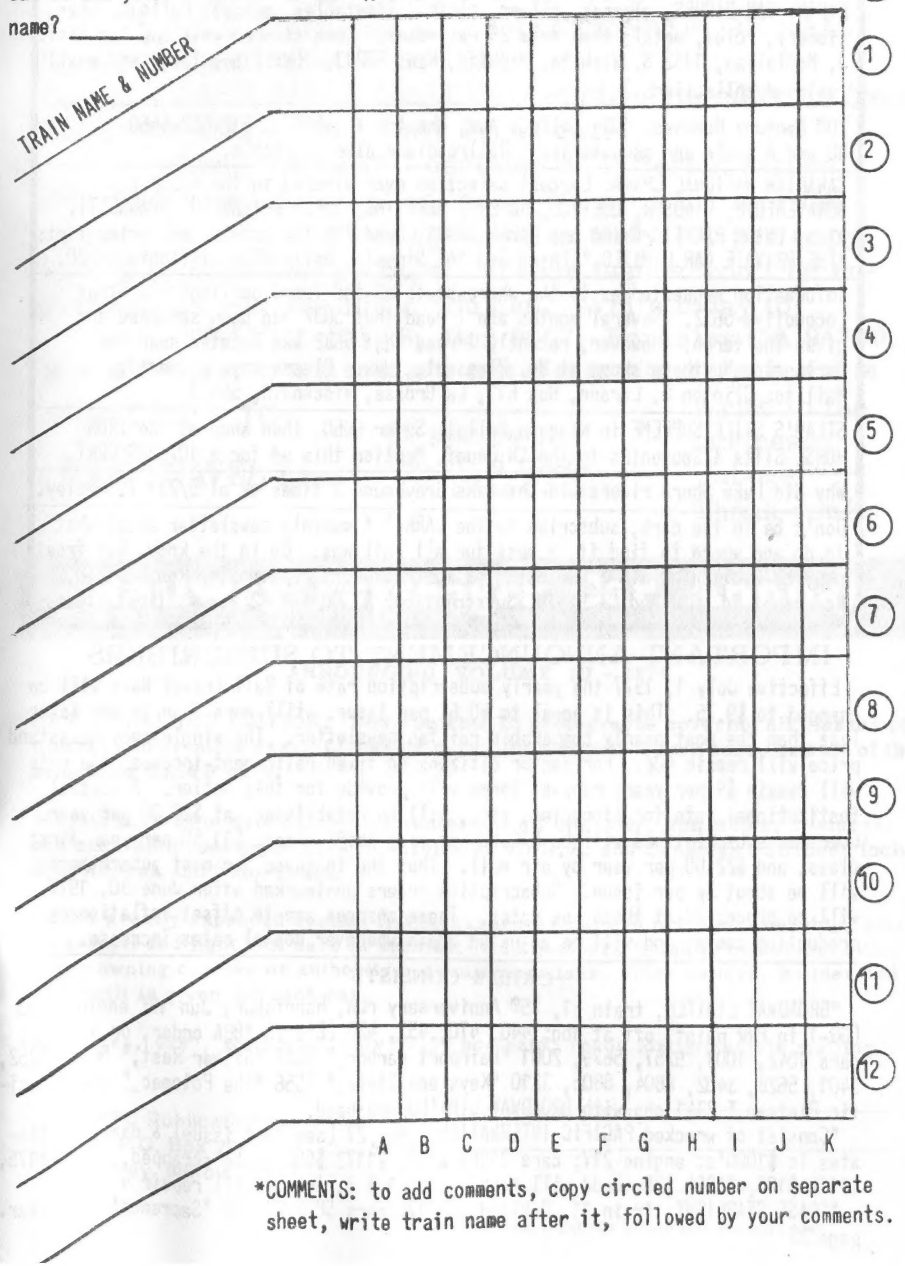
Can we use your name? _____



*COMMENTS: to add comments, copy circled number on separate sheet, write train name after it, followed by your comments.

Express Ads

RAIL FANS ONLY! It's easy to secure your AMTRAK & CN reservations and tickets (or USA Rail Pass)--from anywhere in the world. Tickets by mail from GREAT WESTERN TOURS, 639 Market St., San Francisco 94105, or call (415) 398-2994.

TIMETABLES - Selling "Best of 60's" Ten System TTs - $10. SSAE for new list quarterly. Carl Loucks, 199 Wayland, Hamden CT 06518.

DINING CAR DISHES, glasses, silver, cloth. Timetables, guides, Pullman, stationery, rules, metal items from 25 railroads. Long stamped envelope for list. J. McClellan, 1752 S. Wichita, Wichita, Kan. 67213. (Will buy large and small railroad collections.)

20th Century Hobbies, 1034 College Ave, Wheaton IL 60187. 312-682-4460. HO and N scale and accessories. Railroadiana also available.

CANADIAN NATIONAL CHINA: Largest selection ever offered in the U.S.A.: BONAVENTURE, WINDSOR, QUETICO, RUPERT, MARITIME, QUEEN ELIZABETH, SPAGHETTI. Also, UNION PACIFIC CHINA and PAPER GOODS. Send 25¢ for catalog and price list. "THE PRIVATE CAR LIMITED," Third and "A" Streets, Belleville, Illinois 62220.

Information requested as to the whereabouts of the famed Burlington's Steam Locomotive 5632. Several months ago I read that 5632 had been scrapped and given the torch. However, recently I read that 5632 was located near the Burlington Northern shops at Mt. Pleasant, Iowa. Please anyone, verify. Mail to: Clinton O. Larson, Box 611, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 54601.

STEAM'S STILL SUPREME in Niagara Falls! Savor 6060, then shop at the IRON HORSE Gifts & Souvenirs in the CN Depot. Mention this ad for a 10% DISCOUNT.

Why did Lake Shore riders Cle-Chi take Greyhound 3 times wk of 5/23? T. Healey.

Don't be in the dark, subscribe to the LARK. A monthly newsletter about what to do and where to find it, a must for all railfans. Be in the know. Get free copy by mentioning RTN & enclosing stamp. Mail subscriptions to Ron Hook, 869 Rosemount Rd. Oakland CA 94610. Subscriptions $3.00 for 12 issues first class.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT TO SUBSCRIBERS

Effective July 1, 1977 the yearly subscription rate of Rail Travel News will be changed to $9.75. This is equal to 40.6¢ per issue, still more than 1¢ per issue less than the most nearly comparable railfan newsletter. The single-copy newsstand price will remain 40¢. For senior citizens on fixed retirement incomes, the rate will remain $9 per year; renewal forms will provide for this option. A special institutional rate for libraries, etc., will be established, at $20.00 per year. Overseas subscriptions will be $10.00 per year third class, $11.50 per year first class, and $22.00 per year by air mail. Thus the increase for most subscribers will be about 3¢ per issue. Subscription orders postmarked after June 30, 1977 will be processed at these new rates. These changes are to offset inflationary production costs, and will be adjusted again whenever postal rates increase.

CARS & CONSISTS

*BROADWAY LIMITED, train 41, 75th Anniversary run, Harrisburg Jun 15: engine 4935 (GG-1 in PRR paint) off at Hbg; 440, 470, 452, 428 (E's in ABBA order, on at Hbg); cars 1042, 1001, 5257, 5679, 2001 "Fairport Harbor," 2022 "Silver Rest," 5681, 5252, 5401, 5628, 3402, 8804, 8805, 3210 "Keystone State," 2556 "The Potomac," 2626 "Pacific Plateau," 3341 obs with BROADWAY LIMITED drumhead.

*Consist of wrecked PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL May 27 (see last issue) & damage estimates in $1000's: engine 217; cars 21167 $150, 21173 $500 to be scrapped, 20043 $175, 21172 $100, 21864 $25. Budd will repair cars 1 & 3, Amtrak will repair 4 & 5.

*COAST STARLIGHT, train 11, Oakland Jun 17: cars SP 291 & SP "Sacramento" on rear.

RTN ADVERTISING RATES: Express Ads $1.00 per line of 80 spaces. Display ads (camera-ready) $25 per half-page (maximum size--4x5 inches); smaller sizes are prices proportionately. Write to: MESSAGE MEDIA, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

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